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ABSTRACT

In 1988 the Kentucky Supreme Court upheld a previous decision that the state public education system had failed to provide an efficient system of common schools. The Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA, 1990) came from this decision. This paper reviews the restructuring of a primary school under the KERA, focusing on one collaborative effort between a university practitioner and a school practitioner in developing a year-long pilot project. Crucial components of the collaboration included initiating dialogue, organizing and implementing a primary school model, disseminating the model, and developing leadership. Key components of the pilot project included: (1) development of an integrated thematic curriculum and alternative assessments; (2) a pupil progression plan; (3) an orientation toward success and cooperation; (4) flexibility to allow for multiple age/multi-ability grouping; and (5) creative student evaluation through narrative progress reports. The Partners in Learning model was applied at an inner-city elementary school in Louisville (Kentucky). The success of the new instructional program was confirmed by comparing scores of 15 program second graders on the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills with those of 15 similar students from another school. Six teachers and the school speech pathologist completed a follow-up survey indicating that they continued to use the model, although four have made modifications to it. There is a nine-item list of references. (SLD)

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RESTRUCTURING THE URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOL: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPING A NONGRADED CURRICULUM

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RESTRUCTURING THE URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOL: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPING A NONGRADED CURRICULUM

> "...We view this decision as an opportunity for the General Assembly to launch the Commonwealth into a new era of educational opportunity which will ensure a strong economic, cultural and political future."
> Kentucky Supreme Court

Background Of Primary School Restructuring

In November 1985, a complaint challenged the equity and adequacy of funds provided for the public education system in Kentucky. In October 1988, a judgment was issued stating that Kentucky's public education system had failed to provide an efficient system of common schools. On appeal, the Kentucky Supreme Court issued an opinion in June 1989, which held the system of common schools in Kentucky was unconstitutional. The Court said,

> "This decision applies to the entire sweep of the system --- all its parts and parcels. This decision applies to all the statues creating, implementing and financing the system and to all regulation, pertaining thereto."

In responding to this decision, the General Assembly of Kentucky appointed the Task Force on Education Reform in July 1989. The Task Force was comprised of three committees: Curriculum, Governance, and Finance. A final report was adopted in March, 1990 and House Bill 940 was approved and became law July 13, 1990. Thus began the rethinking of education in Kentucky.

The Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA) initiated substantial changes affecting all areas and levels of schooling. A specific focus was placed on the development of a "Primary School Program." The primary school being that part of the

elementary school in which children are enrolled from the time they begin school until they are ready to enter the fourth grade. Kentucky's Primary School Program Position Statement identified seven critical attributes. They were: 1) Developmentally Appropriate Educational Practices; 2) Multi-Age/Multi-Ability Classrooms; 3) Continuous Progress; 4) Authentic Assessment; 5) Qualitative Reporting Methods; 6) Professional Teamwork; and 7) Positive Parental Involvement.

An operational framework for restructuring the elementary school was defined in terms of three stages: Exploration, Orientation, and Implementation. The stages of restructuring provided for developing an awareness of and understanding for the changes. During the Orientation phase emphasis was placed on finding out about Primary Schools. Schools were also encouraged to develop pilot projects which could serve as implementation models. Through the Orientation phase information gained through the Exploration phase was applied as schools developed an Action Plan for implementing a Primary School in 1992-93. And then Implementation put change into practice as the traditional elementary classroom was restructured to a Primary classroom.

A Collaborative Approach To Restructuring

This paper will describe one collaborative effort between a university practitioner and school practitioner in developing a year-long pilot project which responded to the Primary Initiative required by the Kentucky Educational Reform Act of 1990.

An evolution of the professional, collegial relationship that led to collaboration on the restructuring of a graded classroom will first be described. Crucial components of the collaboration included initiating dialogue, organizing and implementing a restructured primary school instructional model, disseminating the model, and developing leadership.

Next will be discussed the knowledge about collaborative restructuring that each practitioner gained as a result of this project.

Finally, the key components of the pilot project will be described. These included development of an integrated, thematic curriculum; a pupil progression plan (adoption of non-retention policy); an orientation toward success and cooperation; flexibility to allow for multiple-age/multi-ability grouping; and creative student evaluation through narrative progress reports.

Dialogue Strategies for School Restructuring

"**Partners in Learning**" was a graduate training model developed by the School of Education at the University of Louisville. This university-school partnership program was designed to facilitate teacher development in literacy methods and materials. It was a field-based program and utilized classroom teachers teaching teachers as a component of the course curriculum.

In an effort to build a strong program of graduate education on the basis of relevance and transference, a learning lab comprised of Schools was organized. These Schools were already

implementing current literacy theory and thus were invited to become "partners in learning." The overlying philosophy of this partnership was the improvement and professionalization of teaching through connecting Schools of Education with Schools. If university faculty members are to become more expert educators of teachers, they must make better use of expert teachers in the education of other teachers (A Report of The Holmes Group, 1986). A disconnection between research and practice occurs within education. A common view is that universities produce knowledge, and schools are supposed to implement their findings. The "Partners in Learning" model connected university practitioners and school practitioners to systematically study literacy instructional knowledge, reflective practice, and student reporting.

During Fall, 1989, McFerran Elementary School, an inner-city school in Louisville, Kentucky was invited to become a "partner in learning." The university practitioner contacted the school's principal inviting the School to collaborate in developing a field site for a graduate reading course. The intent of integrating "practice in action" with graduate study was to provide an arena whereby students could discuss with school practitioners their literacy curriculum. Subsequently, the university practitioner met with the school's principal and outlined the graduate course's essential curriculum components and topics. The course curriculum was a survey of current

pedagogy in reading and writing instruction. Together they identified how the school's literacy curriculum would fit with university course curriculum extending and enriching the studies.

McFerran Elementary School served as the field site for observing and examining a process approach to reading and writing instruction. Faculty members selected by the school's principal were willing to join with the university faculty in highlighting their literacy instructional curriculum and reflective learning observations. For the field site sessions, the evening course met at the school and allowed the school practitioner to present her/his literacy instructional program without being pulled out of her/his classroom.

Field site sessions provided graduate students with opportunities to interact with teachers who were actually implementing current reading/writing theory and research practice. In turn, the classroom practitioners were provided with the opportunity to contribute to the development of knowledge in the profession, to form a collegial relationship beyond the immediate working environment, and to grow intellectually as they matured professionally (Holmes Group, 1990).

Prior to the field visit, graduate students read and discussed professional literature that examined various literacy strategy approaches at the field site. The graduate students were, therefore, offered an opportunity to become more analytical, reflective consumers of the literacy curriculum the

school practitioners practiced. The field visit showed what a particular school was actually doing in literacy education, rather than what "should" theoretically be done. Following each field site visit, a course session was devoted to analyze what had been presented and to discuss how the university students might adapt the concepts for use in their own teaching settings.

School Practitioner

In preparation for the graduate students' visit to McFerran Elementary, the school principal selected eight teacher participants to share their literacy models. Those selected were active practitioners of process reading and writing models within their classrooms. A special attempt was made to represent each grade level, kindergarten through fifth grade, as well as cross grade level programs. Models selected included: Kindergarten Whole Language, Developmental Writing for First Graders, Reading Recovery, Literature Based Reading/Writing Process for Grades Three and Four, Writing Process in the Fifth Grade, Exceptional Child Education Collaboration, and Library Services. The selected teacher presenters were asked to meet with the principal after school two weeks prior to the field site visit to discuss the purpose and design of the "Partners in Learning" program. During this meeting, the school practitioners developed the focus and sequence of the presentations. Special emphasis was placed on assuring that each presentation's focus was unique and did not duplicate strategies. The sequence of presentations considered the developmental progression of literacy. The presenters

determined that this field site symposium should provide the graduate students with the opportunity to study student work samples, curricular designs, management/scheduling framework, and successful instructional strategies in practice.

School Practitioner Presentation

During the Developmental Writing for First Graders presentation, graduate students studied and discussed excerpts of first grade students' journal entries. Two distinct groups of writing samples were shared: samples collected on the same dates from all students in the classroom, and several samples collected over time from selected first grade students. These different sample groupings provided the graduate students an opportunity to see the varying abilities of students in the same class setting, as well as an opportunity to follow the literacy development of some students.

Discussion also focused on developing an understanding of, appreciation for, and insight about children's early language strategies, skills, and fluency. Attention centered on observing children's writing efforts to better understand their language strengths. The graduate students experienced reading interim phonetic spelling as primary journal writers experimented with the sounds of language to express their thoughts. An emphasis was placed on comparing the extent of primary students' language knowledge as seen in the samples. The graduate students discussed the journal writers' abilities to organize thoughts sequentially. A consideration of the role of errors in language

learning was explored, recognizing that errors are not random and in most cases can be explained by an understanding of how people learn language within the context of their cultural background. Finally, the logistics of scheduling and managing journaling experiences within the first grade classroom were explored.

Summary

The "Partners in Learning" project offered an opportunity for building a professional relationship between university and school faculty. Two practitioners chose to commit themselves to further collaborative endeavors with the belief that through collaboration both might grow professionally and personally. They also shared a philosophy about early reading-writing instruction.

Reciprocal Teaching

During Spring 1990, the practitioners collaborated on a pen pal project designed to benefit both pre-service teacher trainees and primary students. This literacy letters collaboration provided an opportunity to explore current language development theory while fostering and nurturing professional teamwork.

The focus of this collaborative pen pal project was to demonstrate to teacher trainees and primary students the relationship between reading and writing. A key objective was providing teacher trainees with guidance in identifying primary students' instructional needs based on a sequence of letters demonstrating their language development (Armbruster, Anderson & Mall, 1991). Within this experience, the project participants, both primary students and pre-service teacher trainees wrote,

edited and read letters they exchanged with each other.

Each pre-service trainee developed a portfolio of assigned primary students' letters. These letter portfolios were used in the reading methods course for studying the development of students' writing, and language concepting, strategies and skills. Throughout the project the teacher trainees refined their kid-watching skills while developing a sensitivity to children's developmental language usage. Goodman (1982) asserts that pre-service teacher training must support professionalism by developing the trainee's ability to observe children and understand their language strengths. These collaborative efforts created a learning laboratory where pre-service teachers gained an understanding of and insight into language learners, formulating and testing language hypotheses, making their language work for them.

The school practitioner wanted to involve students who did not come from a print-rich environment, in a meaningful, productive learning experience in process writing-reading. Few of the students had access to books or magazines within their homes so the pen pal letters created an environment where students were encouraged to use language for an authentic purpose. The result was primary students having the opportunity to make discoveries about language because they had the opportunity to experiment with language, making the discovery of what language is all - communicating.

Summary

Another benefit of this collaborative reciprocal teaching project was the extension of the collegial relationship between the practitioners. Both practitioners were able to meet professional objectives through reciprocal teaching project. These initial efforts became the impetus for further collaborations.

School District and University Support Structure

Since 1983, a joint committee of the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) and the University of Louisville has funded grant proposals submitted by teams with representatives from both institutions. In January 1989, the Committee's work became part of the larger collaborative effort of the Center for the Collaborative Advancement of the Teaching Profession, one of five statewide centers of excellence in Kentucky. Collaborative relationships between school system and university personnel which might otherwise not develop are nurtured and maintained. Both the University of Louisville and the JCPS share common goals and are open to risk-taking and experimentation in seeking improvement. When school administrators place a high value on collaborative efforts, it becomes easier for interested parties to receive support from district-university staff.

As a result of their prior collaborations the university practitioner and school practitioner committed themselves to apply for a JCPS/U of L Coordinating Committee Collaborative Grant. The objective of that application was to develop a

primary classroom model for Kentucky's Primary Program Initiative.

"Interdisciplinary Thematic Studies For A Non-Graded Urban Primary Model" was one of 23 grants funded by the JCPS/U of L Coordinating Committee for 1990-1991. The collaborative grant project focused on meeting the educational needs of urban primary students through the development of a non-graded classroom environment. In this heterogeneously grouped learning environment, content skills were to be addressed through the study of integrated thematic units based on students' interests. The measurement of student skill acquisition was to be recorded through the use of alternative assessment techniques. Primary students were to be involved in self-evaluation through the use of student developed portfolios. Students would be placed in cooperative learning groupings based on interest, student-selection, task considerations, learning needs, and applicability for peer tutoring.

Model for Restructuring The Primary Classroom

Rethinking the education of primary students was at the center of this university-school practitioners collaboration. In September 1990, the practitioners developed and administered a Student Interest Inventory. Based on the student's identified interest areas, three themes were selected for building an integrated curriculum. The three themes selected were Farm Studies, Dinosaur Studies, and Space Studies.

The collaborative grant provided release time from the

classroom for the school practitioner to work with the university practitioner in developing and organizing the thematic curriculum. Curriculum development began in mid-September with the practitioners spending the day talking through the process and approach that would become the basis of the restructured integrated curriculum. This meeting helped to define how the curriculum would be structured and tied to other efforts and activities of the restructuring project. A prototype of an interdisciplinary unit was outlined. The characteristics of the interdisciplinary theme studies were 1) they were broad, with many subtopics, and focused on developing students' critical and creative thinking and ways of knowing; 2) inquiry was at the center of each theme: studies were driven by questions and students involved in searching for their answers, often using primary sources; 3) they encouraged differentiated and diversified learning activities and assignments; 4) they represented the content and process of what students are expected to learn in school; they were not extra or add on; and 5) the evaluation of the student's growth was ongoing and formative and used alternative methods of teacher assessment and learner self-assessment (Curriculum Report, 1992). The practitioners meet on a bi-weekly basis during the first six months of the project. These regularly scheduled meetings enabled the practitioners to identify problem issues, adapt and modify different dimensions of the restructuring classroom project. These meetings were used to select curriculum materials, examine student's artifacts, and

thoughtfully reflect on what was occurring in the project classroom. These interactive discussions presented an opportunity for the practitioners to talk through the project's ongoing refinement and implementation. These "talks" encouraged sharing of professional expertise with each other, considerate of differing beliefs and value systems (Lieberman, 1988).

The university practitioner regularly visited the project classroom. These visits were of two types. One type was informal classroom observation. The practitioner observed the students engaged in integrative studies and also discussed with individual and small groups of students their attitudes and feelings about their studies. A second type of visit involved the development and implementation of integrative instructional lessons in the project classroom. These project site visits provided the university practitioner with a hands-on perspective for contributing to the ongoing classroom restructuring collaboration.

Curriculum Implementation

In October 1990, the school practitioner introduced the first interdisciplinary theme, "Farm Studies," to the primary students. Within a whole group setting, the school practitioner modelled a brainstorming process, recording student responses to a consideration of what they knew about "The Farm," and what they wanted to know about "The Farm." During these charting activities, the school practitioner used a language experience approach in developing student's graphophonic skills. Skill work

was differentiated to consider the varying ability levels of the students. Students were heterogeneously grouped in six groups of four students each to work cooperatively in a similar brainstorming activity to generate a listing of what their group knew and wanted to know about farm life. Whole group attention was refocussed frequently to review the process of small group interactions in order to develop successful cooperative learning groupings. Daily, the school practitioner led group discussions sharing information on theme components. Students explored a variety of print and non-print materials on the farm theme. These were specifically selected to provide reading and non-reading students an opportunity to locate relevant information.

In the second phase of the process learning theme, the school practitioner introduced the strategy of organizing information into discreet categories. Using the small group brainstorming efforts, the school practitioner modelled a method of selecting categories for grouping items. Students were encouraged to develop as many categories as they deemed necessary. Again students were reorganized in their cooperative learning groups to categorize their information. Time was allocated for sharing group results. These results were collated on charts for all students to use.

During the early stages of a thematic process learning approach, much time was spent in modelling process, learning to work cooperatively in groups, and sharing group efforts.

Emphasis was consistently placed on assisting students in learning to work successfully within the process, a consideration of product results was secondary.

In the third phase of the learning theme, students were given an opportunity to select a question for research. Students were encouraged to consider an area of inquiry in which they were especially interested. Throughout the course of the project, various approaches were used in this student inquiry selection process. In "Farm Studies," each cooperative learning group, whose membership had been determined by the school practitioner, selected a specific topic with individual group members researching different aspects of the topic. This provided groups an opportunity to focus on developing skills in consensus decision making. In "Dinosaur Studies," each primary student in the class selected a specific question for individual research. Learning groups were then formed, based on interest as evidenced by commonality of questions selected. In using this approach, students' interests formed the basis of guiding the small group dynamics. In "Space Studies," each learning group selected a category for exploration, individuals within the group selected a specific question from that category. Prior to the introduction of this theme, students had selected the membership of their learning groups, and a consensus decision making model was refined.

The process learning theme focussed on assisting students in locating information in primary resources appropriate for the

topics selected. Students became familiar with using researching skills to locate information, becoming more proficient in selecting essential data from the resources and communicating that information both written and oral. During this phase of the learning unit, the school practitioner introduced the writing process to the students. Students were grouped with a writing buddy chosen from their cooperative learning group to assist in the revision and editing stage of the writing process. Each cooperative learning group was responsible for producing a book addressing the questions or topics studied. Student produced books included an illustrated cover, title page, table of contents, chapters representing the work of each individual student, and a glossary. Each learning group was also responsible for preparing a presentation, sharing the information they had learned in completing their research. The finished products and presentations were shared with parents, students, and district personnel at culminating unit fairs. A video portfolio was made of each fair.

The process learning model served as the basis of the instructional program. All curricular areas were integrated throughout the unit of study. Students read and wrote about their selected topic. Skill lessons focussed on helping students to develop strategies for assisting them in achieving their goal. The content fields of science and social studies were addressed within the context of the units studied. Since students were motivated to research answers to their questions, often the

content covered and explored exceeded the scope for their grade level approved curriculum. Fine and performing arts as well as physical education were natural inclusions within the unit activities, and were more frequently incorporated into the stream of the day than had been done prior to this models' implementation. Mathematics instruction was more difficult to "fit," unless the topic selected had this area as a core component. Generally, math instruction covered curricular skill and application areas by using the theme components as the context, or developing a specific activity to accompany the unit.

Results of the newly designed instructional method were very successful for the initial group. Fifteen second grade students who participated in the instructional model remained at McFerran during the current school year. A comparison of CTBS scale scores with fifteen randomly selected cohort students from a demographically similar school in Louisville indicates significant differences of achievement. The following table summarizes results of an analysis of variance between the two groups (N = 15 students per group).

Table I

	Raw Scale Score Means		F Ratio
	Control	McFerran	
Reading Vocabulary	589.6	669.3	17.212*
Reading Comprehension	608.6	710.1	34.359*
Total Reading	599.4	690.1	31.955*
Math Computation Analysis	635.1	738.1	26.579*

* indicates statistical significance beyond the 0.001 level.

Instructional Practice

A significant aspect of this model was the necessary adaptation of teaching practices. The teaching experience was more directed, with a work pattern developed to reflect the process unit to include: modelling with the whole group, small group cooperative learning, and sharing small group work with the whole class. As the students became more proficient with the learning process, the school practitioner's role became one of facilitating process, and specific skill tutoring. The pace and pattern of the day reflected the activity orientation of the program. The school practitioner needed to be very flexible in time usage, therefore, lesson planning tended to reflect an overall guide of the day with a variety of activities available dependent on the needs of the individual learning groups.

Alternative Assessment

A key component of this model was developing authentic assessment strategies. With students working on a variety of skills and ability levels concurrently within the group, this component was essential to assess learning. Students were taught to develop writing, and project portfolios. Samples from these were periodically reviewed to determine student strengths. Students kept daily learning logs and math journals. Once the students were more facile in working within the process model, the school practitioner was able to record anecdotal notes of student progress. Students maintained reading logs, and conferences were held with each student twice a week to assess

individual reading strengths. Student written books, both the group research reports and individual fiction samples, were completed for each theme. A Primary Report Form was developed to report student progress to parents each quarter. This form recorded all skills to be included within the process and an indication of student mastery or continuing study. An extensive narrative comment section was included. Finally, a video portfolio of student presentations was prepared. Each student reviewed all assessment samples with the school practitioner to refine student self-evaluation skills.

Parents

Parents were an integral part of this model. All students were placed in the class by parent request, following an information meeting to discuss model components and to share research literature on developmentally appropriate learning practices from the National Council for the Education of Young Children. Parents received a weekly newsletter, written by the students, informing them of learning events and activities within the class. Families of the students attended unit fairs that celebrated student learning at the culmination of each unit. The parents provided input in the development of the Primary Report Form. This bringing together of families helped to raise the students' self esteem, creating "winning learners" of all participants.

Implementation Difficulties

The most difficult aspect of implementing the model centered on assessment. These strategies were generally new to the school practitioner and incorporating them into the day was initially very difficult. Once an understanding was reached that these techniques were to replace strategies in place rather than an add on to current practice, implementation became easier. The students adapted very well to using a process learning model and made significant improvement in skill acquisition. Developing a consensus decision making system was challenging for them. The more opportunities they had to work within their learning groups, the more successfully they extended their group skills.

Dissemination

A key factor in improving the instructional practices within the learning environment is the sharing of actual practices by adults. Practitioners need opportunities and support from colleagues to develop programs that reflect the range of perspectives of knowledge taught. The school practitioner initiated a series of weekly professional development sessions at the site to share the process model developed through the collaboration. Participants in the sessions were encouraged to implement the model in their classrooms and form a support group to extend and adapt the model. In all, eight teachers formed a collegial team which met bi-weekly throughout the year to develop strategies for successful implementation of process learning strategies. This team formed the nucleus of the Primary

Committee at McFerran Elementary. Team members shared successful learning strategies, project ideas, and curricular materials.

The Primary Classroom served as a model for successful implementation of the Primary Initiative embedded in KERA. Educators from the district and throughout the state and from surrounding states visited the site each week. The school practitioner served as a teacher representative to the district and state task forces for the Primary School Program. This involved presenting at district and state staff development workshops for administrators and teachers, as well as suggesting policy for implementation. The school practitioner presented the collaborative model to the district Board of Education as an example of exemplary Primary School initiatives.

Roles and Responsibilities for Restructuring

An understanding of the roles and responsibilities of collaborators in restructuring requires consideration of the following: communication, representation, and decision-making.

Communication

Through initiating collaborative efforts, participants develop the critical, interactive dialogue necessary to promote a common understanding of the goals the practitioners hoped to achieve. Fostering an open, shared communication links participants to the project goals forming bridges between their differing professional agendas. This two-way communication builds trust, respect and rapport between the participants to share authority and ownership of the project. A common

vocabulary with an understanding and agreement of term meanings clarifies communication channels. This requires an unbiased listening/hearing of the perspectives presented by participants.

Representation

The collaboration initiative is a partnership that relies on equal representation. Each participant must initially feel equally enfranchised in the project for there to be success. At first, neither partner can be considered to have the corner on knowledge or solutions. Neither partner can be seen to be the supervisor of the other, either through perceived beliefs of superior professional knowledge or superior hands-on experience. A sharing of responsibilities, materials, and worksites contributes to a collaborative ownership for the project. Collaborators who share enthusiasm, flexibility and a willingness to risk change as they manage the increased workload can remain committed to the project for its duration.

Decision Making

To effectively implement a consensus decision-making model, collaborators need a strong commitment to the project and must be willing to adjust traditional group roles. The labor that often accompanies group decision making can seem inefficient compared to the ease of unilateral decision making. However, a sharing of responsibility and accountability among collaborators, extending to each decision making responsibility within their sphere of knowledge and influence, promotes project success through shared understanding and commitment. The investment of time to build

these bridges of understanding support the collegial relationship. Successful management of this change process provides each participant the opportunity to grow professionally and personally.

Ongoing Refinement and Development

The non-graded primary project developed through the collaborative restructuring efforts of the practitioners served as the model for implementing the Primary Program at McFerran Elementary School. The model's curriculum, grouping patterns, and instructional strategies were extended throughout the elementary program.

To determine how and in what way the project model is currently being used, the teachers who remain in the Primary Program were asked to complete a follow-up survey. Survey forms were sent to the eight teachers who comprise the Primary School faculty and to the speech pathologist. The survey has been returned by six teachers and the speech pathologist. Results of the survey indicate that all of the six teachers continue to use the primary school model piloted during the collaborative grant.

Model Modifications

Teachers were asked to identify any modifications made in the primary model. Four of the respondents identified one or more of the following changes made to the model: (1) creating additional developmental steps in the learning cycle to supplement the process curriculum approach, (2) More large group instruction was done at the beginning of the school year in some sections in

order more effectively teach the whole group to process curriculum, more time within some units was needed to help younger groups. Additionally one teacher noted that "second" graders had generally written longer and more detailed reports. She also modelled note-taking because of difficulty last year's class had with note-taking.

The teachers' responses suggest that the original instructional model developed through collaborative restructuring served as the basis of the Primary School Program at McFerran Elementary School. This model is being used and both modified and adapted based on classroom observation and application.

Observations: Children & Process Learning

Teachers using the model made the following observations.

1. The process curriculum allows some children to learn at their own speed and pick tasks appropriate for them. For some children, however, it is too much freedom. They need more structure to develop.

2. The children are more motivated and are becoming less dependent on the teacher for direction. They are learning how to cooperate and communicate with others. Teachers are also reasonably convinced that students retain more.

3. The children gain more confidence, self-esteem. They grow at their own rate and do make progress. They have a tendency to try things easier and solve their own problems.

4. The speech pathologist felt that the process approach makes more demands on children's language skills than traditional teaching. Therefore speech therapy is needed even more for some students in order for them to be successful.

5. Students are more interested and motivated by process learning at the first. Many of them are "tired" of their topic before presentations are ready.

6. Allowing children to choose their own interest to research, makes them more motivated.

7. The process approach makes the child's total education more holistic and therefore less fragmented. This is very difficult to do with a non-process approach curriculum.

8. There appears to be different developmental stages in note-taking. It is extremely important to ask children why/how they arrive at their answer.

Barriers Encountered During Implementation

The following barriers were identified by the teacher respondents: (1) insufficient time to plan and evaluate jointly, more time is needed in the classroom, (2) insufficient number of adults to meet the needs of all the children; either a smaller teacher to student ratio is needed or a paraprofessional should be provided to help, (3) insufficient reading materials were available on child's level and there was insufficient resources and money to purchase what was available.

Miscellaneous Information

Teachers also observed a few other variations within the model. The children appeared to have grown in a more natural way and many exhibited self-confidence. Teachers believed it [process learning] had given the students new insights into learning. Class research was done with the less mature children while the more independent students continued group projects. The speech pathologist changed her approach from developing lessons which paralleled the teachers' lessons to lessons which partly, or were totally integrated within the teacher's lessons.

Summary of Results

Each of the responding teachers stated that the pilot model

had initiated the process of restructuring their own classrooms. The instructional model provided the impetus and preliminary structure for this restructuring. Respondents' comments indicate that the barriers of time, supplies, and personnel support placed strains on implementation. An issue to be considered as elementary classrooms are restructured is that of which ongoing support is to be provided for the teacher. Time demands placed on the teachers involved in restructuring need to be considered. The restructuring may place emphasis on the need for additional supplies and equipment if the restructuring initiative is to be successful.

What Was Learned About Collaboration

University Practitioner

This collaborative restructuring project presented several learning opportunities. What was learned by the university practitioner about collaboration from this one collaborative experience follows. The first critical component of this collaborative effort was fine-tuned interpersonal communication. Each collaborator brought to the restructuring project varying educational experiences and beliefs. These varied experiences and beliefs needed to be "talked out" if they were to effectively impact all phases of restructuring the classroom. The impressive challenge of being able to concisely communicate ideas and beliefs was ever present.

Also critical was decision-making. At each phase of restructuring, crucial decisions had to be made. The planning

phase involved both collaborators in examining and discussing the issues and alternatives of process learning, groupings, and integrative curriculum. The planning phase and initial implementation phase decision-making was collaborative. After implementation, the school collaborator became the primary decision-maker. The university collaborator became more of a professional reference and resource.

Another critical aspect of collaboration is time and effective time management. Participation by the university practitioner in this collaborative classroom restructuring project was an "add on" to other professional responsibilities. Since participation in the collaborative project was a priority, this commitment translated into an attempt to manufacture time.

Collaboration with school practitioners supported a dimension of continuing professional development through active involvement with children in classroom settings. These opportunities to observe as well as facilitate a learning episode are fundamental to the university practitioner role as a teacher of teachers. Students' course evaluations state that such continuing classroom involvement adds relevance and depth to instruction.

Decisions regarding the restructuring of the classroom learning environment must radiate from the teacher. On a day to day basis the teacher in the classroom is integrating the variables of the classroom. The decisions made must reflect this interaction. The university practitioner may contribute and

facilitate this classroom restructuring process, but cannot lead it.

Issues to be considered should further collaboration occur include the following: 1) identify early in the planning phase how decision-making would be approached throughout the collaboration, 2) establish a known strategy and timeline in order to facilitate collaborative efforts, and 3) always identify different avenues at the onset to potentially account for the time commitment necessary. If educational institutions value collaboration, they need to support collaborative efforts through release time for such.

School Practitioner

Working to organize and communicate the key components in collaborative project enabled the school practitioner to focus on the values and constraints of this experience. It is felt that successful collaborative projects such as this one require administrative support, sufficient resources, time, and participant satisfaction. This team was fortunate to work within a community in which collaboration is encouraged through grants, professional development programs, and university/district partnerships. Availability of such support and resources for collaborative ventures is essential for substantive change process in restructuring initiatives. The affirmation and support received from school administrators, colleagues, and university personnel, during initial collaborative projects encouraged and stimulated further explorations which culminated

in the JCPS/U of L collaborative grant that restructured the primary learning environment.

The personal commitment necessary for successful implementation of a collaborative project is also significant. Time must be allocated to meet as a team to plan, develop, adapt, modify, and implement project components. Often the only time available was on weekends or late evenings. An understanding of participants' personal and professional commitments must be considered in time usage. Participants must care deeply about the project for it to be realized.

The personal satisfaction derived from participating in enhancing the learning environment for twenty four at risk primary students was especially fulfilling. Shared readings with the university colleague enabled the school practitioner to risk completely altering her approach to primary education. Students were supported in their discoveries within the language rich classroom environment. Children who had not been successful in prior schooling experiences were proved capable of being so in this case. Tremendous pleasure was derived from their successes and encouraged the school practitioner to continue making the commitment necessary for continued collaboration.

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